

George Cromley

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September 10, 2010

Press Release:

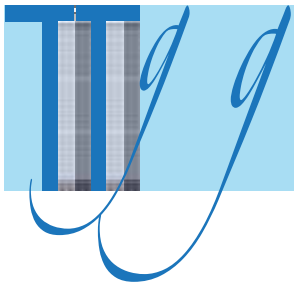
Pedro Lasch & **TWIN TOWERS GO GLOBAL** will issue three special 9/11 anniversary reports for the AND AND AND platform at dOCUMENTA (13).

The Architecture and Engineering Committee, as well as the Media Department of the organization **TWIN TOWERS GO GLOBAL**, present their first collaboration with visual artist and Duke University professor Pedro Lasch. As a resident of the **TTGG Artists & Scholars Reinvent World Trade** program, Lasch will be one of several consultants helping engineers and architects in the development of the organization's plans to rebuild the New York Twin Towers in various cities around the world. The first cities will include New Orleans (U.S.A.), Budapest (Hungary), and Kabul (Afghanistan).

The reports on progress in these cities will be issued on September 11 of each year until the conclusion of dOCUMENTA (13) in 2012. This press release constitutes the first report, and it includes the following materials:

1. **TTGG** Executive Director Michael Stubb's official invitation letter to Lasch.
2. Lasch's public acceptance statement of the **TTGG** residency.
3. Information regarding *Tribute in Light* and *Phantom Limbs*: two trajectories that serve as background for Lasch's **TTGG** collaboration.

For further information on any of these materials, please visit the **TTGG** website, or contact George Cromley - **TTGG** Media Department - g.cromley@twintowersgoglobal.org



Michael Stubbs

Executive Director

executive@twintowersgoglobal.org

August 12, 2010

FROM: Michael Stubbs, TTGG Executive Director
TO: Pedro Lasch - Visual Artist & Duke University Assistant Research Professor
CC: Barry J. White - TTGG Architecture and Engineering Committee Chair
RE: Invitation Letter to the TTGG Artists & Scholars Reinvent World Trade Residency Program

Dear Mr. Lasch,

It is with great pleasure that I write to you with a formal invitation to join the Architecture and Engineering Committee of TWIN TOWERS GO GLOBAL. Your first residency at our *Artists & Scholars Reinvent World Trade* program will be for the period of September 2010 to September 2013, with the possibility of an extension for another three-year term from 2013 through 2016.

During this time you will serve an advisory capacity at our organization, working with our architects and urban planners as they develop proposals for future WTC reconstructions. Most importantly, you will serve as an artistic consultant for the development of the first confirmed plans to rebuild the New York Twin Towers in the cities of New Orleans (U.S.A.), Budapest (Hungary), and Kabul (Afghanistan).

Upon review of the materials provided by you at our request in the exploratory summer period, it was the unanimous conclusion of the members of the TTGG Architecture and Engineering Committee, as well as our Board of Directors, that you are an ideal partner for our organization. As an artist, we would like you to bring to TTGG the critical approach to public monuments that we have observed in your *Sculptural Proposal for the Zocalo in Mexico City* (1998-2004), as well as your *Phantom Limbs* series (2001-2010). We also value your years of academic experience at Duke University, and your public service work as a board member of the North Carolina Arts Council (2007-2010).

We hope you will accept this invitation after reviewing the enclosed list of conditions. If you wish to do so, you may send your acceptance letter to Barry J. White, Chair of Architecture and Engineering Committee. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call or email his office.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Michael Stubbs - Executive Director
TWIN TOWERS GO GLOBAL

Statement Accepting TTGG Invitation

Posted: September 4th, 2010 | Author: admin | Filed under: Phantom Limbs | No Comments »

In August 2010 I received an invitation to join the organization Twin Towers Go Global as the first artist in residence for their Artists & Scholars Reinvent World Trade Program. Excited by the ambitious program of TTGG, I accepted the invitation on September 2nd, 2010. Conscious of the possible criticisms and objections of many people whose opinion I respect, I am issuing this short public statement.

I am thrilled to be working with TTGG. Artists today cannot sit on the sidelines as decisions are being made about the fate of the world. If someone has decided that the Twin Towers of New York are to be duplicated in different cities around the world, why shouldn't artists or architects get involved to make sure it gets done right? TTGG's challenge to help develop plans for new WTC buildings in New Orleans and Kabul, for example, is formidable.

As I join a project that is so clearly larger than all of us, I will do my best to stay true to the principles I hold dear. These include the importance of international cooperation over violent confrontation, as well as the belief that art and aesthetics exist within, not outside, the most difficult ethical issues of our time. Is it possible to build a truly international memorial that honors the lives of those who died in New York, as well as those fallen in Kabul, Baghdad, and Darfur? Can we imagine a common language in art and architecture, which might express the often contradictory positions we inhabit? I believe we can, and for the next three years I am ready to do everything within my power to help Twin Towers Go Global realize that dream.

***Tribute in Light* and *Phantom Limbs*: two trajectories that serve as background for my collaboration with TWIN TOWERS GO GLOBAL.ORG** Pedro Lasch, September 2010.



Tribute in Light as seen in New York City beginning 2002

When I began work on my *Phantom Limbs* series in October 2001, I could not have known that anyone would seriously entertain the idea of rebuilding the New York Twin Towers in different places around the world. All I knew at the time, as did so many other people who experienced 9/11 first hand, was that the tragic events of that day would scar me forever. I also knew that this event would mark an entire generation, if not several.

For me, the Twin Towers' first reappearance immediately resembled urban and mediatic phantom limbs, collective and individual manifestations of felt absence, the imagined presence of the dead and the disappeared. These first sightings

appeared in New York City, and would later be visually represented by the enormously popular commemorative installation of LaVerdiere, Myoda, et al entitled *Tribute in Light* (see illustration on top left).

But even before these powerful light beams were to illuminate the dark New York night, the double icon of the World Trade Center would appear somewhere else, not too far from where the Taliban had only recently exploded the ancient sculptures of twin Buddhas. In late 2001, U.S. soldiers were reported to have made a special request to their superiors as they established the first military base in the occupied city of Kabul. They wanted the army to bring as large as possible a remnant of the Twin Towers, so that they could place it at the center of their base. Perhaps only equalled by the popularity of collecting and keeping remnants of the Berlin Wall, this request of the soldiers became one of the first examples of the ever growing passion in the U.S. and elsewhere to use WTC relics and fragments as public and private memorials.

When I read the story of these soldiers in Kabul, I decided to begin my own 9/11 memorial. At its most basic conceptual level, the project has not changed since. It consists of rebuilding the Twin Towers in various cities around the world. Unlike most of the rushed memorials that artists and architects from all nationalities and backgrounds proposed during the immediate aftermath of 9/11, I decided that I wanted to leave time to heal, feel, and reflect. The project would have to take many years, in order to relate the attack to past historical events and future events of geopolitical significance.

During the first few years of research and sketching, I learned of an international trend that to this date is surprisingly unknown even in specialized professional circles. Hundreds of thousands recall the Albert Speer-like memorial by LaVerdiere and Myoda. Yet few people know that similar, monumental twin light beams have been projected unto the night skyline of various



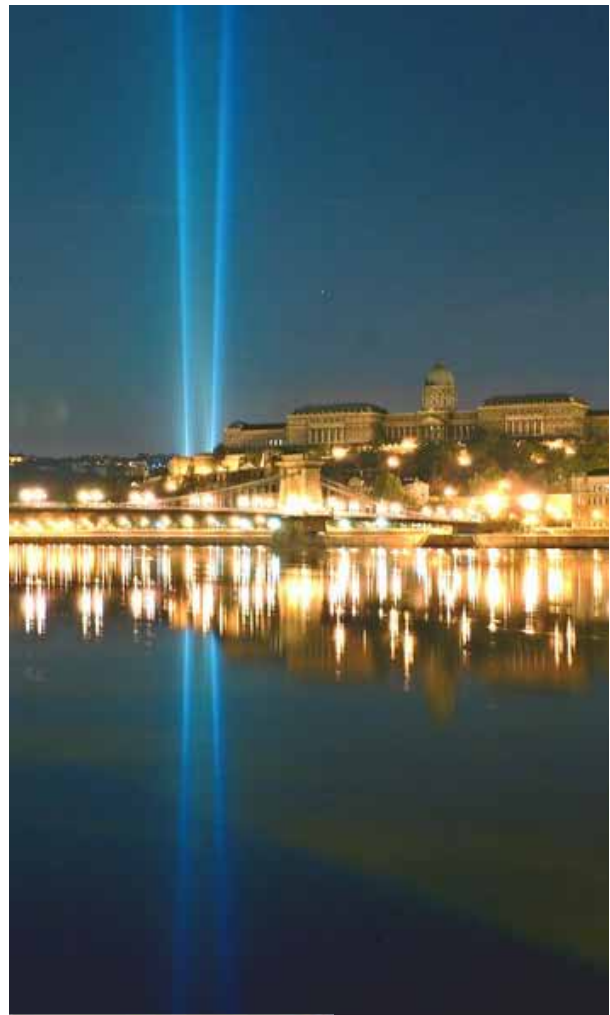
Artistic rendering of Albert Speer's 1937 *Cathedral of Light*

cities around the world as a commemorative gesture of solidarity with the victims of 9/11 and their families. These ethereal replicas of the Twin Towers have been staged in places as diverse as Budapest, Montevideo, Paris, and Liverpool (see images of the first three to the right, top to bottom). They have been produced by different agencies and groups, sometimes by a U.S. embassy, sometimes by a local government, sometimes by a joint diplomatic effort.

The appearance of the twin beams in these places turned them into natural candidates for the actual reconstruction of the New York WTC buildings. As an artist working alone, all I could do was develop illustrations, proposals, maquettes, renderings and paintings imagining what the Towers would look like in these different cities.

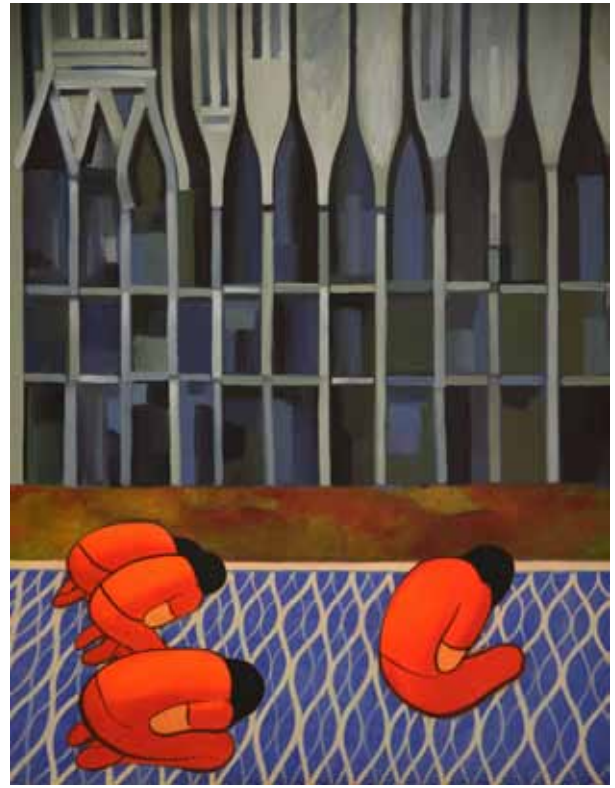
I added to this list of cities other candidates for WTC reconstructions, places that seemed inextricably connected with the history of the Towers, the events of 9/11, and even apparently unrelated sites that have become significant in the post-9/11 global order. These other sites include places like Baghdad's Green Zone, Guantanamo's Camp X-Ray, Darfur's refugee camps, Gaza City, and Medellin.

Even more fitting to my project than the global appearance of the twin light beams, was the growing international movement to rebuild the Towers, formally organized in the end with the foundation of TWIN TOWERS GO GLOBAL in 2006. Intentionally low profile during its first few years, at least until its most recent announcements in August and September of this year, TTGG greatly surprised me with a request for visual and textual materials related to my project. While I had followed their progress, I had always assumed that an international coalition of corporate groups and non-profit organizations would have little or no interest in the work of an artist obsessed with the Towers. I later learned in conversations with TTGG staff that a highly respected board member had seen my paintings in the *Phantom Limbs* series at a recent exhibition in London. He was so taken by what he saw that he insisted that other TTGG members see the work. Every turn of events since that time in July, including the TTGG's invitation to join them in their architectural work as an artistic consultant, has been



incredibly exciting and unexpected. Readers may understand my surprise as they see the work from *Phantom Limbs* reproduced here, and published for the first time for this special AND AND AND report.

Note: To see images sources and research background information, please see the full report at Pedro Lasch's website section devoted to *Phantom Limbs*: <http://www.pedrolasch.com>



Pedro Lasch. Selections from *Phantom Limbs* series (2001–2010). Clockwise from top left: Kabul (detail), Guantanamo (detail), Baghdad.